

**Reply to the questions raised by the Hon. Andrew CHENG
On the Administrative Structure on Sport**

As some of the questions raised by the Hon. Andrew CHENG have been covered at the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs held on 14 July, the reply to those questions will not be repeated in the ensuing paragraphs.

I. Administrative Structure

Expression of Views

During the consultation period from 23 May to end-July 2002, the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) received a total of 380 submissions, of which 57 were on the establishment of the Sports Commission and its structure. Copies of those submissions are available at the Secretariat of the Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs for Members' information.

Our analysis revealed that the sports community, in particular the Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong (SF&OC) and National Sports Associations (NSAs) have given rather definite and positive responses, which are highlighted below:

- (i) SF&OC indicated clearly their support for option C (setting up of a Sports Commission to replace the Sports Development Board (SDB))
- (ii) 43 NSAs and SF&OC member associations handed in submissions and signed survey return forms through SF&OC. Out of the 43 forms returned, 34 (80%) chose option C
- (iii) The majority of views expressed by other sports-related bodies, universities, education institutions, District Councils and individual members of the public supported option C.

Besides, on the day following the release of the consultation paper, i.e. 24 May 2002, 5 newspapers published editorials supporting the dissolution of SDB, and only one doubted the effectiveness of setting up a Sports Commission.

Benefits of the New Administrative Structure for Sport

It is the Government's intention to establish a new administrative structure for sport to enlist representatives from different sectors such as sports, education, District Councils, academic, social welfare, business and tourism to work on the policy and direction for sports development and advise the Government on the mechanism, criteria and priority for funding for sports. Upon the dissolution of the SDB, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) will take over the executive responsibility for funding support to NSAs from SDB. A one-stop funding office will then be set up to provide a one-stop-shop service to NSAs. The work generated will be absorbed by LCSD through internal deployment and streamlining. The benefit of the new administrative structure for sport is that it will be able to initiate partnership between the sports and non-sports sectors, and reduce overlapping functions with a view to achieving greater administrative efficiency and resources optimization. Moreover, as the new structure has responded positively to the views of the sports community, we expect such a change will strengthen unity in the sports community in preparation for the 2006 Asian Games and 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Regarding the implementation of the recommendations of the Report of the Sports Policy Review Team, with the setting up of the Community Sports Committee, Major Sports Events Committee, Elite Sports Committee and the Sports Commission, the recommendations will be discussed in the relevant committees, and proposals will be put forward to the Government for implementation according to priority.

II. HKSI and Elite Training

Elite Training

Elite training will basically follow the existing approach. In other words, the future HKSI will continue to provide coaching, sports science and medicine, training venues and other support services to elite athletes, the only change is that HKSI will be managed by an incorporated body to allow greater flexibility in its management and operation. The future HKSI will be a government funded incorporated body with its Board of Directors appointed by the Government. Such arrangement is essentially the same as the existing management arrangement of HKSI. The Government will closely monitor the operation of HKSI. The Elite Sports Committee to be set up under the new structure will advise on the formulation of policy on elite sport.

To facilitate planning in future, HAB and LCSD will continue to arrange consultation forums and workshops to collect the views of coaches, related technical staff and athletes.

We would like to emphasize that the savings achieved in this restructuring exercise would be channeled to the future development of sports. Elite training, in particular the operation and development of HKSI, will be one of our key focuses.

Management of HKSI Venues

Some of the outdoor sports facilities of HKSI, such as the golf driving range, are not for elite training purpose. In future, HKSI should focus on training of elite athletes and would not need to retain and manage the facilities that have nothing to do with elite training. To achieve effective use of resources, the Government therefore suggests placing such venues under LCSD management, so that HKSI would be able to focus on elite training, and the public could enjoy access to more venues. LCSD will accord priority booking of these venues to HKSI for elite training as required, and will open them for the public only when they are available. In fact, HKSI has put in place a membership system to allow public use of its facilities. In response to the concern and views expressed by coaches and athletes, we held detailed discussions on this issue with coaches and staff of HKSI, with a view to getting a clearer picture of the usage and requirement of coaches on outdoor facilities in the course of elite training and ensuring that elite training will not be affected.

III. Staffing

As the majority of SDB staff are engaged in HKSI-related activities, we envisage that this group of staff would be retained by the re-constituted HKSI to continue with their present duties upon dissolution of SDB. Those SDB staff members who could not be absorbed by the new structure would become redundant. The detailed arrangement has yet to be determined pending a detailed assessment of the future staffing requirement. Some of the SDB staff could be absorbed by HAB for the secretariat of the new Sports Commission under non-civil service contract terms. Those who are made redundant will be given redundancy payment in accordance with the Employment Ordinance. To ensure a smooth transition, the guiding principle we adopted will be to minimize redundancy through re-deployment and re-employment.

IV. Others

The paper submitted mainly seeks to elaborate on the new administrative structure for sports and its working relationship with the Government departments concerned in future. It has repeatedly emphasized the importance of initiating long-term partnership with different sectors of the community to promote sports development. This is also one of the key tasks of the future Sports Commission. SF&OC, being a key stakeholder in local sports scene, will naturally be a major strategic partner of the Sports Commission. We are working with SF&OC on the detailed arrangement.

Home Affairs Bureau
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